



Please ask for:  
Direct Dial No:  
Fax No:  
E-mail:

Paul Wilson  
01629 761125  
01629 761149  
[paul.wilson@derbyshiredales.gov.uk](mailto:paul.wilson@derbyshiredales.gov.uk)

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

Mrs. Julie Baranek  
Clerk to Matlock Bath Parish Council  
[clerk@matlockbathparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@matlockbathparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Dear Mrs. Baranek,

### **GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES AND THE LIFTING OF LOCKDOWN MEASURES**

Thank you for your letter dated 15<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

Following the receipt of your letter, you will be aware of various initiatives that the District Council has been engaged with during the last week in order to seek to address many of the concerns that have been raised not just by Matlock Bath Parish Council, but also other Town and Parish Councils across the whole of the District.

As you are aware, on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020, the Prime Minister published the Government's Covid-19 Recovery Strategy which sets out the approach to dealing with the Covid-19 Pandemic. The strategy includes a timetable for lifting restrictions in England which commenced on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

In summary, the Government has now advised that people may drive to outdoor open spaces (including National Parks), irrespective of distance so long as they respect social distancing guidelines while they are there. People can also exercise as many times each day as they wish and spend time outdoors subject to not meeting up with any more than one person from outside their household.

Prior to last weekend, the District Council, alongside its partner organisations, ran a concerted PR campaign which clearly stated that whilst people were now allowed to travel, the vast majority of facilities and services (e.g.. pubs, cafes, restaurants, public toilets, play areas, visitor centres etc,) across our District remain closed. The only exception related to the re-opening of car parks to alleviate potential adverse impacts on our communities and in the interests of road safety.

Messages were posted on our website, Twitter and Facebook pages requesting that visitors show respect to local communities and one Facebook post reached almost a quarter of a million people – a record. It was also shared almost 2,000 times and attracted 428 comments. In general, the comments, particularly from local people, were supportive of our stance.

However, despite our request for people to stay at home, we all know what happened in practice. Many of our market towns and villages were inundated with visitors ignoring social distancing guidelines and causing concern amongst our communities. Unfortunately, due to the nature of the Government's advice, the Police are powerless to restrict the number of visitors or enforce social distancing as it is not an offence not to social distance. This position has not changed since last weekend.

cont'd .....

**Paul Wilson, MCD, Dip TP, Dip Mgmt, MRTPI  
Chief Executive**

Town Hall, Bank Road, MATLOCK, Derbyshire, DE4 3NN

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Information communicated to the District Council may be disclosed to the public under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

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22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

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In response to last weekend's events, both the Leader of the Council and myself have made representations in national, regional and local forums in order to highlight our concerns about the inadequacy of the current guidelines. I have also made representations through the Derbyshire Local Resilience Forum and the Chief Superintendent for North Division. The Parish Council will have now received the letter from Chief Superintendent Hayley Barnett which outlines the Police position. In addition, I have been informed that this weekend there will be increased Police presence across the Derbyshire Dales and, in particular, our tourist hot-spots, and there are additional traffic enforcement measures to be put in place. However, neither the District Council nor the Police can impose controls that are unsupported by law.

This weekend, another concerted PR campaign has been launched which includes a joint statement signed by our Council Leader and other Local Authority Leaders here in Derbyshire, together with the Chief Constable, Chief Fire Officer, East Midlands Ambulance Service and local NHS Trusts. Here's the link to the joint statement:-

<https://www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/your-council/news-and-publications/latest-news/3083-respect-our-local-communities-joint-message>

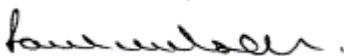
In terms of implementing practical measures to support and encourage social distancing, on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020, the District Council's Director of Community and Environmental Services contacted you to invite the Parish Council to submit its views on the measures that could be considered by Derbyshire County Council Highways Department to enforce social distancing. I presume that the Parish Council has responded to this invitation.

In terms of parks, play areas etc., we are currently working on some proposals that are to be introduced in early June as part of the Government's step 2 social distancing adjustment measures.

In regard to public conveniences, the District Council's Emergency Committee last night took the decision to keep all 11 of our public conveniences closed until we are in a position to guarantee the safety of our residents, visitors and workforce. This position is under constant review.

In summary, I hope the Parish Council can recognise that we have sought to use our influence wherever possible and we will continue to do so in the coming weeks and months. In the meantime, thank you for your co-operation, understanding and support during what are, extraordinarily challenging times.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Wilson  
Chief Executive

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Chief Executive**

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